

Editorial

As the new Editor in Chief of the European Journal of Integrative Medicine, I am delighted to have this opportunity to welcome you to the Journal in its new online format. I am also very pleased to now build on the excellent work of Prof. Stefan Willich, who had the initial vision to develop this journal. It is exciting news that the journal will receive its impact factor later this year.

The opportunity for patients to choose and access a range of options is an important component of their health care pathway. The European Journal of Integrative Medicine will continue its research focus on illustrating the potential impact of combining elements from different health care systems and their relationship with conventional medical care. The scope of the journal allows opportunities for dissemination of translational research including its integration into conventional healthcare.

My experience as Chair of the Research Council for Complementary Medicine (RCCM) in the UK has demonstrated the importance of bringing research communities together, which I hope to encourage and develop further through this journal [1]. My involvement with other international research initiatives such as GP-TCM [2], ISCMR [3], and PedCAM [4] has also demonstrated the benefits of international evidence based knowledge exchange and research capacity building. My recent appointment as Professor of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Integrated Health at London South Bank University and the links with the Confucius Institute based at the university will further these international opportunities for sharing and disseminating research on integrative medicine.

Since its inception in 1983, the RCCM has been instrumental in bringing together and disseminating the evidence base for complementary medicine, with Department of Health funding. This initiative resulted in the UK CAM specialist library which is now an integral part of NHS evidence [5]. The European Journal of Integrative Medicine acts as a portal where health care practitioners can access relevant evidence to influence their clinical practice and policy. We are therefore particularly interested in publishing systematic reviews on topics relevant to integrated care.

Complementary medicine professionalisation and a commitment to research are key for integration to move forward if inter-professional rivalry is to be avoided. The European

Journal of Integrative Medicine is interested in encouraging new researchers and CAM practitioners to be research active and publish. Universities have an important role in providing opportunities for developing academic CAM research. This has been successfully achieved in the UK and particularly developing research capacity for health care practitioners. Engaging CAM practitioners in developing the research agenda is critical and a recent RCCM initiative brought together different CAM professional groups to discuss safety and safe practice of CAM in healthcare. The resulting consensus paper is presented in this issue of the European Journal of Integrative Medicine.

In 2009, the RCCM's mapping of postgraduate studies demonstrated the breadth of CAM research in doctoral studies within Complementary and Integrative medicine in the UK [6,7]. In this issue, the range of UK postgraduate research is illustrated in the abstracts from the CAMSTRAND meeting held in Southampton, UK in March 2011. The annual conference on Complementary and Alternative Medicine Strategies, Training, Research and New Developments (CAMSTRAND) was conceived in 2003 to showcase postgraduate and practitioner research. It has provided an arena for participants to present and discuss their research in a supportive peer and academic environment. The 2011 conference demonstrated a range of CAM and methodological approaches used in its evaluation, as well as new ideas for translational research, which also reflects the aims and scope of the European Journal of Integrative Medicine. The keynote presentation given by Torkel Falkenberg, Associate Professor in Health Care research at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden, demonstrated the breadth and importance of traditional healthcare practices.

The journal will continue to encourage submissions relating to the various aspects of integrative medicine. In addition to original research relevant to clinical practice, it is hoped that at least one systematic review can be included in each issue.

References

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